

MAYOR'S ADVISORY GROUP
MAY 17, 2005

MINUTES

Members Present

Joseph Donaldson, Mayor
Stephanie McKinney
Joanne Keene
Renee Fauset
H.E. Gene Westerhaus
Nat White
Mitch Strohman
Julie Pastrick
David Camacho
Tara Green
Judy Boyer

Members Absent

Grover Decker
Kapri Saunders
Stephanie Ludwig
Lee Treece - Excused
Dana Russell
Frank Brandt
Karl Baumgartner
Coral Evans-Randall

Guest Present

Theresa Hatathlie - NACA
Michael Lainoff
Mark Neimann
Kevin Brown

Staff Present

Dave Wilcox, City Manager
Laura Parker

Stephanie McKinney, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:50 a.m.

Stephanie introduced new member Judy Boyer. Judy serves as Human Resources Manager to RPI Services. Introductions were made around the table of those present.

A motion was made by Mitch Strohman to approve the minutes from the February 15, 2005 meeting. One change was noted by Tara Green—Ms. Green was listed “absent” twice on the minutes. Motion seconded by Nat White. Motion carried unanimously.

Stephanie McKinney gave an introduction regarding the subject—What is our workforce development, critical issue in our community. Stephanie thanked the speakers for attending and agreeing to speak to group. The speakers will be Mark Neimann, Nestle Purina PetCare, Kevin Brown, Flagstaff Unified School District and Mike Lainoff, Coconino Community College. Per Stephanie, following the presentations, the meeting will be opened up for discussion—information sharing.

Mark Neimann, Nestle Purina PetCare. Dry pet food plant processing 225,000 tons per year. Entry-level production & warehouse positions are most usually the positions that are open for hiring. Challenge in hiring/retaining employees—not a lot of individuals possess production

experience. High Turnover rate of approximately 20%. Turnover due to individuals leaving the area. Would like to see Flagstaff become the place that people want to stay. Change from a transitional cost of living could be an issue. They have applied for state funding to train employees, have used Coconino Community College for training in the past, had on site training also conducted by CCC.

Discussion was held on the information presented by Mr. Niemann, and questions answered.

Kevin Brown, Flagstaff Unified School District – Challenges in the K-12 systemic structure is not unlike what was developed in the late 1800's. Needs of the workplace have changed—need more highly skilled individuals for the various workplaces. Most young people will change jobs eight times. Another challenge in educating youth is to teach them how to learn new skills quickly—need basic education, 3R's (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic), some youth do not possess the basic skills. A lot of the higher skilled youth leave the area and the young labor market that remains struggles. FUSD received a tax increase of 25% locally, 75% from the state, are expecting to receive approximately \$400,000 this year. The State should be funding at three times that amount—State is unwilling to increase funds. Legislature unwilling to raise the amount of funding given to school districts. Youth need basic skills by age five, such as—being able to color, read, or they struggle throughout their school years, a lot of these youth end up at poverty level if they lack basic skills. 80% of brain development occurs during first five years of life. Need to work with colleges & universities to provide a pipeline for higher education. The CAVEAT program assists youth in industrial, vocational and technical education skills.

Discussion was held on the information presented by Mr. Brown, and questions answered.

Dave Wilcox mentioned that the City/County/Coconino Community College/NAU and FUSD have been interested in higher education and have taken information to the State. Dave expressed his concerns about knowing what various committees are doing throughout the City. Question raised as to: "Will having various committees spread people thin?", and should a committee be set up to address needs of students. Julie Pastrick stated that she felt the committee sponsored by the Chamber will help to advance projects. Important to bring all groups together for unified sharing of information.

Mike Lainoff, Coconino Community College has a good broad certificate and degree program. Flagstaff Medical Center recently partnered with CCC to develop a nursing program due to a need for nurses. Just graduated the first class of 20 nurses in May, 2005. CCC is now looking into working with car dealers to provide training for auto mechanics, as there is a current need for auto mechanics. CCC has also provided on-site training to agencies such as Nestle Purina and W.L. Gore. Recently did a class on applied math at Gore to benefit employees. Partnerships win the district are coming along—need to get varied groups/service providers to 'sing from the same hymnal.'

Mr. Lainoff stated that there is a need to determine what the standards are and to work towards meeting the standards, i.e., education—to enable students to be successful in the workforce. Need to provide core competencies, such as forklift, applied math, technology, reading for information—groups are already in place that have a broad spectrum.

Discussion was held on workforce readiness programs, needs of employers –vs- education needed to fill jobs.

Need to look at more than funding for improving education. Need to raise the priority of education—parents support, discipline of students, etc.

Upcoming Meeting Topics:

Topic for June: Ideas presented:

- Proposition 100 – where do we go from here?
- What drives the cost of living to be so high in Flagstaff?
- How do we structure-communicate with various groups, how can we work better together & bring other groups together in areas of health, employment & housing

Stephanie and David Camacho will work on a discussion for June.

Discussion was held on having a dialog with the Mayor as to “what do you want” from the group. The Advisory group was created five years ago with the idea that the group would advise the Mayor on issues and provide the Mayor with feedback. Need to explore what is the value of this group and what help are we providing to the Mayor. Need to give the group a five year review—where have we been, where are we going?

Meeting adjourned. 8:20 a.m.